

AND THEN NOT A WORD WAS SPOKEN.

By "Bud" Fisher.



LAND TITLES.

XI.—The Public Land System.

By Frederic J. Haskin.

Previous letters of this series have described how vast tracts of country came into the possession of the United States by cession on the part of the original states and by purchase from foreign nations. The title to the greater part of this land, involving not only the attributes of sovereignty, but the actual ownership, became vested in the United States, the only incumbence being the right of the Indian tribes, who were entitled to be secured in the use and occupation of so much as might be necessary to their support.

The cessions by the independent states which had formed the Union were in the nature of deeds in trust for the benefit of the people, and the land was to be used for the common good, and the domain west of the Mississippi, which was acquired by actual purchase, and the land acquired by cession from Spain and Mexico were given the same status as a matter of wise public policy.

The distinction between the public lands and the public property of the United States in lands is that the latter consists of real estate which has been ceded to or purchased by the United States for federal purposes, and is held as an individual holds his lands. The former was and is held under the implied declaration of the United States that except for such portions as may be found to be needed for federal purposes the custody of the United States is temporary and to continue only until settlement and development can be secured. None of the land in either class could be conveyed except upon the authority of Congress, but public property is conveyed by the usual forms of deeds, while public lands are conveyed by patents.

The colonial history of troublesome questions arising out of the titles of lands was the consequence of the fact that the United States had been particularly unfortunate in getting its western land affairs into a tangle, and it is probably due to the warning of the experience of the United States that an entirely different plan and one which has been carried out with a minimum of friction.

The simple, but at the same time effective, system of disposition of the public land system was devised by a committee of Congress of which Thomas Jefferson of Virginia was chairman. He was probably the originator of the basic ideas which were to be followed in the future.

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tribal and general allotments of specific tracts of land in fee.

The second step in opening the public lands for settlement consisted of

Surveys Run starting point of

From Meridians. base line in each

instance was a

true north and south line or meridian.

This meridian was established with

reference to the whole body of land

which was to be surveyed and the

whole was constituted as one or more

land districts, according to the total

quantity and the contour and location

of the component parts. Each land dis-

trict was divided into ranges by lines

parallel to the principal meridian.

These lines were six miles apart, and

the ranges were numbered east or west

of the meridian. Each land district was

thus divided into strips six miles wide

and as long, running north and south,

as the length of the land district.

The ranges were then divided by

lines running east and west into

squares which measured six miles on

each side, and thus contained thirty-

six square miles. These squares were

denominated townships and were still

further subdivided into parcels of a

mile on each side and containing 36

square sections to a township. Each

of the sections was divided into quar-

ters, and the quarter sections were

subdivided into smaller subdivisions

than a section was made, and at

that year the quarter section, which

has been the unit of grant for most

of the public land, was established.

The quarter section is, therefore, a

square of land measuring a quarter of

a mile on each side and containing 160

acres. Further subdivision for con-

venience of private transfer and for

the purpose of surveying was made in

1832, and quarter section sections were

established, each of these units con-

taining forty acres.

It is a familiar fact that lines rep-

resenting north and south directions

cannot be drawn as

parallel, since me-

ridians converge so

as to meet at the

poles. This has the

effect of making a slight decrease in

the width of the northerly part of a

range, the difference becoming more

marked as the line goes farther. For

convenience, all the differences are

incorporated into the north and west

quarter sections of each township and

these sections, with those including

lakes and rivers are laid off into frac-

tional divisions subject to special descrip-

tions in the former public domain

of the United States are uniform in

their character, and a description as a

given quarter of a section, which

has been the unit of grant for most

THE EVENING STORY.

CINDERELLA.

(Copyright, 1914, by W. Werner.)

Wad Jennings stood on the corner of

34th street and Wabash avenue and

shivered as he turned the fur collar of

his heavy overcoat up around his ears.

Then he reviled the climate. Out home,

in North Dakota, this temperature

above zero would have meant clear,

enjoyable cold. Here it fairly tore

the marrow of your bones. The con-

founded humidity! The mist that dripped

softly down was like a cold, wet

blanket, out of which you could not

wriggle. Its drizzly embrace infuriated

you. Yet Jennings had no other choice

than to go back to the smoky comfort of

the hotel office, which he had left an hour

before to hunt friends who proved to be

away from home. He was tired of

the company of his own kind—cattle-

men—and there were no others staying

at the hotel. He had headquarters of

farmers and ranchers. He had got into

town that morning and spent the day

at the stockyards. He had forgotten

spending a pleasant evening, and, may-

be, several, with the Driscolls, who

were years ahead of him in the city, and

a ranch for an apartment building. Since

they were out of town he felt lost, as

he had no one to turn to for help.

A street car, its yellow headlights

dimmed by the mist, swung out of the

grayscale, and he stepped aboard. He

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hate you," she said, childishly. Then

another car assumed out of the gray

mist and she turned to spring on the

slackening step. She sprang. Wad

stuck his hands in his pockets and

watched her with disgusted interest.

Was she going to a fancy dress dance?

Well, anyway, she'd die, as sure as

she was standing there.

And then, as her wet foot touched

the platform, the cheap satin pump

fell from her foot in front of Wad.

The car leaped forward into the gray

mist; the girl's cry of dismay was

lost in the clang of bell and wheels;

the pump remained and she went on.

"Well, that's a shame!" said Wad, as

he picked up the pump and ran after

the car. And then another loud clatter

and clang whooped behind him. He

dodged back to the pavement just in

time to escape being run over by a fire

hose.

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Little Stories
for Bedtime

By THORNTON W. BURGESS.

(Copyright, 1914, by J. G. Lloyd.)

Mrs. Grouse and Jumper the

Hare Hold Their Breath.

Hold your breath, and hold it hard.

As Mrs. Grouse and Jumper did.

And learn how close the hunter came.

To where a-shake with fear they hid.

It was very trying. My, my, my, I

should say so! It was very trying, in-

deed. Peeping out from under a thick,

snow-growing branch of a hemlock tree,

Mrs. Grouse and Jumper the Hare

watched a man with a terrible gun

coming nearer and nearer. Now, if it

had been Reddy Fox or Old Man Co-

yote coming, Mrs. Grouse would have

felt sure that she could trust to her

strong wings to take her out of dan-

ger, and Jumper the Hare, who could

depend upon his long legs in case they

were discovered. But a man with a

terrible gun was a very different mat-

ter. Shot from that terrible gun could

go so much faster than Mrs. Grouse

could fly or Jumper could run that they

would have very little chance of get-

ting away unhurt, and they knew it.

Jumper had whispered to Mrs. Grouse

in sitting perfectly still, and this was

the very best thing they could do.

The hunter didn't know that they were

there, and he didn't know that they

were under that hemlock branch he

might go right past without even know-

ing that they were anywhere near him.

But it was hard work, the very hard-

est of all. He had to hold his breath

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